

Just how this elimination of silica is accomplished Mr. Weed does not say, and the matter really lies outside his province. Algæ are the chief agents in this work, and in the cooler waters at some distance from the springs mosses also assist. *Cladothrix gypsophila*, *Mastigonema thermale*, *Leptothrix laminosa*, and *Leptothrix* sp.? are the chief filamentous forms found growing in the hot waters. Various diatoms, *Denticula valida* in particular, eliminate silica from the tepid waters of the marshes about the Hot Springs, and their dead tests make up the bulk of the ooze which forms the soil of these marshes. The moss found in the warm waters was *Hypnum aduncum* var. *gracilescens*. The memoir is an interesting contribution to the knowledge of vegetation as a geological agent.

Minor Notices.

WITH THE APPEARANCE of Part V, devoted to Pteridophytes, Professor John Macoun's Catalogue of vascular Canadian Plants has been completed. It has been very handsomely done and the painstaking care so evident through it all has made it a mine of information concerning the Canadian flora. The present part brings up the generic numbers to 764, the specific to 3,054. A large appendix brings together additions and corrections to Parts I-IV, the results of all monographic work done since the beginning of the catalogue being included. It is promised that Part VI, soon to appear, will include Characeæ, Musci, and Hepaticæ, about 1,000 species in all. The part is rounded out by a complete index to all the parts, and the five will make a very complete and compact volume.

ALONG WITH the preceding comes a list of Canadian Hepaticæ, by Wm. Hy. Pearson, published in the same style, and containing 12 full page plates.

OPEN LETTERS.

The word "Biology."

An open letter from a "Prominent Zoologist" brings a breath of "*Bion*" into the October *Gazette*. In it, an original and characteristically unsearchable defence is proposed for the current etymological piracy *in re* the word "biology." It is probably the same "prominent zoologist"—if one may judge by kinship of orthographic recklessness—who presents, editorially, in the Nov. *American Naturalist* a similar sin against rational use of terminology. The argument perpetrated by the GAZETTE letter and perpetrated in the *Naturalist* editorial is as follows: "Zoologists were the first to study life; therefore they have a prior right to the word *biology*." The truly "biological"

lapse in the major premise is not altogether unapparent to those who recall the fostering care of botanists—such as Darwin for example—while putting the infant industry of the zoologists on its feet. Why, even Huxley looks upon his long zoological training-course as a means of fitting him for extended study of the Gentians. An additional and quite unanswerable argument is brought forward, however, in the *Naturalist* editorial. “On a broad etymological basis the use of the word by zoologists is wrong,” observes the writer. And then he straightway insists upon the right to use it. The peculiar appropriateness of an incorrect word for a one-sided, incorrect science is felt by us all. Indeed, as an additional evidence of true “biological” wrath at the philological pharisees and purists, the “prominent zoologist” proudly parades in his GAZETTE letter a Greek termination which we sincerely hope is not to be found elsewhere. At least the dictionaries, being written on the much despised “broad etymological basis” may be relied upon to exclude it.

Apparently the trouble with the prominent zoologist is this: In college days he was probably brought under the influence of Dr. Mark Hopkins, of venerated memory, and he has adopted one of the contestable *dicta* of his early philosophic mentor. It was a pleasing idiosyncrasy of Dr. Hopkins to insist that a “profound abyss” yawned between plants and animals. “Certainly,” thinks the disciple. “‘Life’ characterises animals and, since there is the profound abyss I learned about, plants must be in a condition of partial paralysis and the biologist should shun them.” This is what the editor of the *Naturalist* means when he speaks of the “living side” of the plant-world as if there was any side *not* alive. The same confused, altho Hopkinsesque, notions of plants and animals so characteristic of half-biologists, are shown again in the *Naturalist* editorial when it is said—“fully one-half of the teachers of botany are unable to give any of the living side of their subject. * * * The zoologist teaches *all that is taught* of life.” The intimation is plain that the “living side” taught by the other half of the botanists is very different from the “life” (or in the *original* Greek *Bion*) which zoologists wish to claim as their peculiar province. A little less slavish knuckling down to the Mark Hopkins school, a little more Greek and a good deal more biology would make the “prominent zoologist” something of an orthographic authority.—AN OBSCURE AND ORDINARY BOTANIST.

Labeling specimens for the herbarium.

The usefulness of the herbarium is largely determined by the excellence of the labelling. Bearing this in mind, I cast about for a method of labelling the specimens in my herbarium, and, finally after having read of the methods used here and there and finding none that suited me exactly, I thought of the following way which has proved one of so great neatness, excellence, fulness and easeness as to lead me to mention it for the instruction of others who desire to render their collections more serviceable. In labelling my herbarium I used the printed names and descriptions clipped directly from the revised Manual. I labelled my shelves with the printed ordinal name, but could not use the descriptions. The genus covers have the generic